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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/527,743

03/14/2005

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EXAMINER

KEBEDE, BROOK

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2823

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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3 MONTHS

03/19/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/527,743

Applicant(s)

MARUYAMA, YASUSHI

Examiner

Brook Kebede

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 March 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/14/05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The preliminary amendment filed on January 18, 2006 under 37 CFR 1.115 is acknowledged and the amendment have been placed in the file. In addition, the substitute specification filed on January 18, 2006 under 37 CFR 1.125(b)(2) and the marked up copy under 37 CFR 1.125(c) is also acknowledged and the amendment have been placed in the file.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 14 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 14 recites the limitation “wherein the collective lens is placed at a position shifted more toward **the center part** of the imaging area as a distance from **the center** of the imaging area to a pixel thereof increases” in lines 5 and 6.

However, it is not clear whether there is proper antecedent basis can be established for “**the center part** of the imaging area” and “**the center** of the imaging” because the position of the imaging area is not adequately defined. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Although an attempt has been made to identify all instances of claim language non-compliance, such identification is extremely burdensome due to the large number of instances.

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Examples are provided herein below. Since such noncompliance confuses the claims to the extent that not all of the problems are readily apparent, then upon amendment, if an alternative interpretation of claim language requires a change in the rejection, the new rejection may properly be made final.

Claim 1 recites the limitation “wherein the pixel,” in line 3, “surface symmetry in a pixel,” in line 6, “imaging area to a pixel,” in lines 9-10, and “converting portion in a pixel,” in line 12.

However, there is lack of proper antecedent basis for “the pixel” and “a pixel” in the claim language for the following reasons:

Claim 1, in line 2, recites “an imaging area including multiple two-dimensionally arranged pixels.”

Is the “pixel” that is claimed in line 3 different from line 2, 6 and 12 and vice versa.

Since there is more than one pixel claimed in the preceding limitation, there is a great deal of lack of clarity for “the pixel” and “a pixel” in the claim language in the meaning and scope. Therefore, the claim is indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 2 recites the limitation “solid-state image pickup device according to claim 1, characterized in that the surface of the photoelectric converting portion has a rectangular form missing at least one corner; and the collective lens is positioned at a substantial center of the rectangular form in a pixel in the center part of the imaging area,” in lines 1-5. However, the recited claim lacks clarity in its meaning and scope for the following reasons:

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It is not clear what “the surface of the photoelectric converting portion has a rectangular form missing at least one corner” entails. Since the instant application device structure, a three dimensional structure the “photoelectric converting portion” will have six-sided rectangular surfaces and it is not clear which surface has been claimed. Therefore, the claim is indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

There are also similar problems in claims 2-4, 9, and 13.

Claims 2-8 and 10-12 are also rejected as being dependent of the rejected independent base claim.

Applicants’ cooperation is requested in reviewing the claims structure to ensure proper claim construction and to correct any subsequently discovered instances of claim language noncompliance. See *Morton International Inc.*, 28USPQ2d 1190, 1195 (CAFC, 1993).

In light of the rejection 35 U.S.C. § 112 second Paragraph that set forth herein above, the following 35 U.S.C. 102(b) rejection of claims 1-13 is based on prior art which reads on the interpretation the claim language of the instant application as best as understood by the Examiner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 1-7, 9, 10, and 13-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Inoue et al. (US 6,211,509).

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Re claim 1, Inoue et al. disclose a solid-state image pickup device characterized by comprising: an imaging area including plurality of two-dimensionally arranged pixel (see abstract), wherein each of the pixel has a collective lens (29) and a photoelectric converting portion (see Fig. 1A and abstract); the photoelectric converting portion (22) has a surface in an asymmetrical form (see Fig. 1A); the collective lens (29) is positioned above the photoelectric converting portion and at a substantial symmetrical center making up for the surface asymmetry in a pixel in a center part of the imaging area (see Fig. 1A); the collective lens (29) is placed at a position shifted more toward the center of the imaging area from a part on the symmetrical substantial center as a distance from the center of the imaging area to a pixel thereof increases (see Figs. 1A and 2A); and the collective lens has an amount of the shift depending on the degree of asymmetry of the surface of the photoelectric converting portion in a pixel positioned in an equal distance from the center of the imaging area (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 2, as applied to claim 1 above, Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including the surface of the photoelectric converting portion (22) has a rectangular form missing at least one corner; and the collective lens is positioned at a substantial center of the rectangular form in a pixel in the center part of the imaging area (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 3, Inoue et al. disclose a solid-state image pickup device characterized by comprising: an imaging area including plurality of two-dimensionally arranged pixel (see Abstract) , wherein the pixel has a collective lens (29) and a photoelectric converting portion

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(25) (see Fig. 1A) ; the collective lens (29) is placed at a position shifted more toward the center of the imaging area as a distance from the center of the imaging area to a pixel thereof increases; and an amount of the shift of the collective lens is defined based on the height from a surface of the photoelectric converting portion of the collective lens and the thickness in the direction of depth of the substrate of the photoelectric converting portion such that an amount of light incident within the photoelectric converting portion can increase (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 4, as applied to claim 3 above, Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including the photoelectric converting portion is inclined to a predetermined side within a pixel, and the collective lens (29) has an amount of shift depending on an amount of an inclination of the position of the photoelectric converting portion within each of pixels having an equal distance from the center of the imaging area (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 5, as applied to claim 3 above, Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including the pixel further has multiple wires (27 22) provided through an insulating film (36), and the wires are placed at a position shifted toward the center of the imaging area like the collective lens (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 6, as applied to claim 3 above, Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including the photoelectric converting portion is placed at a position shifted from the center of the imaging area toward the outside with respect to the surface (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 7, as applied to claim 6 above, Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including an amount of the shift of the bottom of the photoelectric converting portion is increased as the distance from the center of the imaging area to a pixel thereof increases (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 9, Inoue et al. disclose a solid-state image pickup device, characterized by comprising: an imaging area including multiple two-dimensionally arranged pixels (see Abstract), wherein the pixel has a photoelectric converting portion (25); a bottom of the photoelectric converting portion is placed at a position shifted from the center of the imaging area toward the outside with respect to the surface thereof in each of at least partial pixels of the multiple pixels (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 10, as applied to claim 9 above, Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including an amount of the shift of the bottom of the photoelectric converting portion is increased as the distance from the center part of the imaging area to a pixel thereof increases pixels (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 13, Inoue et al. disclose an electronic apparatus having a solid-state image pickup device, the apparatus characterized in that: the solid-state image pickup device has: an imaging area including plurality of two-dimensionally arranged pixel; the pixel has a collective lens (29) and a photoelectric converting portion (25); the collective lens (29) is placed at a position shifted more toward the center of the imaging area as a distance from the center of the imaging area to a pixel thereof increases (see Abstract and Fig. 1A); an amount of the shift of the collective lens is defined based on the height from a surface of the photoelectric converting

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portion of the collective lens and the thickness in the direction of depth of the substrate of the photoelectric converting portion; and a bottom of the photoelectric converting portion is shifted from the center of the imaging area toward the outside with respect to the surface pixels (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 14, Inoue et al. disclose a method of manufacturing a solid-state image pickup device comprising: forming a photoelectric converting portion (25) and collective lens (29) in each pixel of an imaging area, wherein the collective lens (29) is placed at a position shifted more toward the center part of the imaging area as a distance from the center of the imaging area to a pixel thereof increases (see Fig. 1A and abstract); and an amount of the shift of the collective lens is defined based on the height from a surface of the photoelectric converting portion of the collective lens and the thickness in the direction of depth of the substrate of the photoelectric converting portion such that an amount of light incident within the photoelectric converting portion can increase (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 15, as applied in claim 14 above Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including that a bottom of the photoelectric converting portion is placed at a position shifted from the center part of the imaging area toward the outside with respect to the surface (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Re claim 16, as applied in claim 15 above Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including an amount of the shift of the bottom of the photoelectric converting portion is increased as the distance from the center of the imaging area to a pixel thereof increases (see Figs. 1A through 7E and related text in Col. 2, line 20 through Col. 10, line 25).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 8, 11, 12, 17, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue et al. (US 6,211,509) in view of Yamada (US 2005/0035376)

Re claim 8, as applied to claim 3 in Paragraph 6 above, Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including the photoelectric converting portion (22) includes an impurity region formed by performing ion-implantation into a semiconductor layer.

However, Inoue et al. do not specifically disclose the photoelectric converting portion formed by multiple ion implantation process.

Yamada discloses formation of the photoelectric conversion region by multiple ion implantation that includes an angle implantation (see Figs. 11-13) in order to suppress variation of readout voltage of the device (see Page 10, Paragraph [0130] through [0131]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant(s) claimed invention was made to provide Inoue et al. reference with multiple ion-implantation process that includes angle implant during formation of photoelectric converting portion as taught by Yamada in order to suppress variation of readout voltage of the device.

Re claims 11 and 12, as applied to claim 9 in Paragraph 6 above, Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including the photoelectric converting portion (22) includes an impurity region formed by performing ion-implantation into a semiconductor layer.

However, Inoue et al. do not specifically disclose the photoelectric converting portion formed by multiple ion implantation process that includes an angle implantation.

Yamada discloses formation of the photoelectric conversion region by multiple ion implantation that includes an angle implantation (see Figs. 11-13) in order to suppress variation of readout voltage of the device (see Page 10, Paragraph [0130] through [0131]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant(s) claimed invention was made to provide Inoue et al. reference with multiple ion-implantation process that includes angle implant during formation of photoelectric converting portion as taught by Yamada in order to suppress variation of readout voltage of the device.

Re claims 17 and 18, as applied to claim 16 in Paragraph 6 above, Inoue et al. disclose all the claimed limitations including the photoelectric converting portion (22) includes an impurity region formed by performing ion-implantation into a semiconductor layer.

However, Inoue et al. do not specifically disclose the photoelectric converting portion formed by multiple ion implantation process that includes an angle implantation.

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Yamada discloses formation of the photoelectric conversion region by multiple ion implantation that includes an angle implantation (see Figs. 11-13) in order to suppress variation of readout voltage of the device (see Page 10, Paragraph [0130] through [0131]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant(s) claimed invention was made to provide Inoue et al. reference with multiple ion-implantation process that includes angle implant during formation of photoelectric converting portion as taught by Yamada in order to suppress variation of readout voltage of the device.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure Weiss (US 4,694,185), Maegawa et al. (US 5,371,397), and Aoki et al. (US 5,479,049) also disclose similar inventive subject matter.

Correspondence

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brook Kebede whose telephone number is (571) 272-1862. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5 Monday to Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matthew S. Smith can be reached on (571) 272-1907. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Brook Kebede
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2823

BK
March 15, 2007